

Connections

A Publication for Employees of the Missouri Department of Transportation

May 22, 2014

Understanding the Provisions of HJR68

by Holly Dentner

Central Office

Districts

Northwest

Northeast

Kansas City

Central

St. Louis

Southwest

Southeast

Now that the Missouri General Assembly has passed House Joint Resolution 68, it's important for MoDOT employees to understand what that means for transportation in Missouri. When voters go to the polls in November, they will be asked to decide if they want to improve Missouri's economy and keep Missouri families safe by investing in much-needed transportation improvements.

MoDOT supports any additional funding that will allow us to deliver the types of transportation improvements that Missourians have told us they desire. While it is not our job to ask people to vote yes, we can help Missourians understand how the additional funding could improve safety and create jobs.

With that in mind, here are some details from the provisions of HJR68:

The bill will allow voters to approve a $\frac{3}{4}$ -cent sales tax to generate funding for any transportation purpose. Current fuel tax proceeds can only be spent on roads and bridges.

MoDOT would receive \$480 million per year, and cities and counties would split \$54 million per year. This is the same way fuel taxes are shared today. To generate an equivalent amount of money through fuel taxes, it would take an increase of 14 cents.

The $\frac{3}{4}$ cent sales tax would begin in January 2015, and last for 10 years. Voters would have to approve again to extend it.

Tax would not be charged on food or medicine.

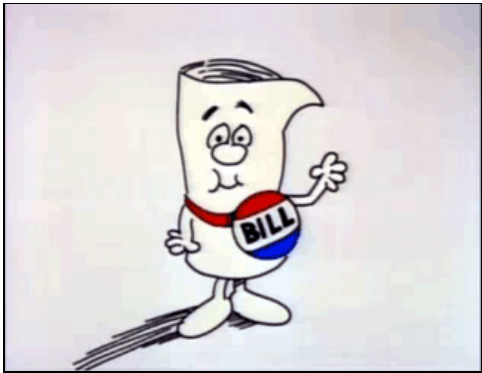
During the 10-year period of the temporary sales tax, Missouri would not be able implement toll roads or raise the state fuel tax, which is frozen at the current 17 cents per gallon for both gasoline and diesel.

The Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission would be required to publish a list of projects that will be delivered with the new revenues prior to the public vote in November.

MoDOT would be required to make annual reports to the Governor and General Assembly on use of the sales tax revenue, progress on projects, changes in scope of work, etc.

A preliminary list of projects that will improve safety and create jobs will be completed in June, with a public comment period during July. A list will be recommended to the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission for final approval in September. Missourians will be able to clearly see what they will get for their investment.

With the passing of HJR68, these are exciting times for all Missourians and the future of transportation, prosperity and safety in our state.



Archives

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Print Entire Edition

Commission Summary Highlights

by Bob Brendel

Presentations of MoDOT's Fiscal Year 2015 budget and the 2015-2019 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) – both of which will be finally acted on in June and July, respectively – were the focus of the May 14 meeting of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission.

Due to the absence of Commission Vice Chairman Joe Carmichael because of illness, the MHTC did not have a quorum, limiting the commissioners to non-action items.

Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker presented MoDOT's \$2.2 billion budget and explained how it is connected to the department's annual financial forecast and the STIP. The financial forecast, which was presented to the commission in January, predicts the state and federal revenues that will be available to the department. The budget details how MoDOT will spend its money, while the STIP prescribes how MoDOT will allocate a portion of the budget to highways and bridges, multimodal operations and local programs.

She also explained the most often misunderstood aspect of the budget – how it can reflect \$841.7 million in contractor payments when the STIP shows

MoDOT Construction Awards vs. Contractor Payments (In millions)			
	Awards	Fiscal Year 2015	Future Years
Fiscal Year 2015 Construction Awards	\$720.0	\$223.3	\$496.7
From Projects awarded in Prior Years		590.3	
Contractor Payments		813.6	
Utility Relocation Payments		8.0	
Payments to Others		20.1	
Total Contractor Payments		\$841.7	

only \$720 million available for contractor awards. The reason is that most MoDOT projects take more than one year to build and payments to contractors can be made over multiple years. For FY2015, \$223.5 million of the \$720 million in awards will be paid to contractors this year, with \$496.7 million to be paid in future years. Meanwhile, nearly \$600 million will be

paid to contractors for work that was completed previously.

Broeker said the budget will be finalized to account for legislative actions taken by the Missouri General Assembly during its 2014 session and the MHTC will be asked to approve the budget at its June 11 meeting in Columbia.

Transportation Planning Director Machelles Watkins presented the 2015-2019 STIP, which is virtually unchanged from the 2014-2018 program approved a year ago. That’s because of the commission action taken in January that froze the STIP based on the financial forecast that showed the construction budget falling to \$325 million by 2017, far below the \$485 million it takes each year to take care of the system and services we enjoy today.

She noted that typically between 300 and 500 projects are added to the STIP each year. This year’s five-year program added only 25, a statistic Commission Chairman Steve Miller called “stunning.”

Whereas the STIP is normally only fully programmed for years one through three, this STIP is fully programmed for only two years. Director Dave Nichols said our current funding situation has created a situation where “we find ourselves in a reaction mode instead of a planning mode.”

Following a public comment period, the commission will give final approval to the STIP at its July 9 meeting in St. Joseph.



Commission Summary

- Bob Gilbert, chairman of the Jefferson City Area Chamber of Commerce, expressed his organization’s full support of the proposed ¾-cent sales tax dedicated to transportation. He cited how important transportation projects and partnerships are to a community, describing the \$7.9 million Route 179/Mission Drive interchange that enabled the construction of the new \$200 million St. Mary’s Health Center that is nearing completion. Jefferson City Mayor Eric Struempf also addressed the commission, saying: “As a life-long Jefferson City resident, I’ve seen how transportation is essential to growing our local economy and our state economy. MoDOT has done a great job building trust throughout our community and across the state and has built a reputation as being an agency that can get things done.”
- Chief Engineer Ed Hassinger gave the director’s report. He showed the commission a video of the Innovations Showcase held last month in Springfield. He noted that “the best of the best” innovations at MoDOT were on display and the next challenge is to realize implementation of the best practices statewide. He also told the MHTC that for the seventh consecutive year, MoDOT employees contributed more money than any other state agency -- \$172,260 -- to the Missouri State Employees Charitable Campaign. He thanked MoDOT’s campaign coordinators – Dawn Haslag, Kelly Mertens, Jennifer Jorgensen and Richard Schomaker – for their leadership. Hassinger also told the commission that mowing season has begun. He reminded the commissioners that MoDOT maintains 385,000 acres of roadsides, with a three-times-a-year mowing routine. The primary purpose of mowing is visibility and driver safety.
- On Friday, the commission met via teleconference and voted to refinance \$978 million of state road bonds. Bonds that were issued in 2006 and 2007 were refunded for a new bond sale that was held May 19-20.

State Employee Recognition Week Celebrates Public Servants

by DeAnne Rickabaugh

Missouri’s annual State Employee Recognition Week , May 26 -30, honors the dedication and commitment of state employees. The theme of the week, Missouri State Employees – Missouri’s Pride, reflects the appreciation citizens have for those in public service.

MoDOT will host a variety of events statewide to recognize and thank employees. Though divisions and districts can choose other activities, suggested activities for the department include:

Monday – Memorial Day Holiday

Tuesday

MoDOT Pride Day – wear MoDOT gear – shirts, jackets, hats, etc. With supervisor permission and if employees have no meetings with outside partners, jeans may be worn.

STATE EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION WEEK

May 26 - 30, 2014



Tempting Treats Day – Employees can bring in their favorite treats to share with their work groups.

Wednesday

Wellness Wednesday – Get out and get moving during at least one break today. Take a quick walk outside. You might come back refreshed and with new ideas to try. It might become a habit!

Thursday – Missouri State Employee Appreciation Day

Throwback Thursday – Replicate “Throwback Thursday” Facebook posts by sporting fashions from any period of MoDOT history. Pick your favorite decade and dress to impress. Work groups can start the day with a quick “best dressed” contest with photos of the winners featured in Connections.

Friday

Who Are You Rootin’ For? – Support your favorite team, sport or athlete by wearing a jersey, team colors, pins, hats, etc. With supervisor permission and if employees have no meetings with outside partners, jeans may be worn.

In addition, a special event will be held on the Capitol lawn in Jefferson City from 11 am to 2 pm on Thursday, May 29 (Rain location – Truman Building). The Office of Administration is working with area businesses to provide free refreshments, prizes and discounts. ALL state employees – statewide – are entered in a special drawing for prizes. MoDOT will again set up a table to offer maps, child passenger safety information, and a chance at winning Amtrak tickets.

Part of State Employee Recognition Day includes a special ceremony on the south steps of the Capitol at approximately noon. The crowd will be called to attention for the presentation of Colors by the Dept. of Corrections’ Color Guard. Immediately following the posting of the Colors, Cari Collins with the Dept. of Corrections will sing our National Anthem directly followed by the singing of God Bless America by MoDOT’s own Thomas Wilkerson.

State Budget Includes Cost of Living Increase for Employees



Some welcome news out of this year’s legislative session: the Missouri legislature has included a cost of living increase for state employees in the fiscal year 2015 budget. The 1 percent increase would go into effect on Jan. 1, 2015. As part of next year’s state government budget, the cost of living increase must be approved by Governor Nixon before it becomes official.

Missouri state government employees may also see the return of a state match to the deferred compensation program. Legislators added a \$25 per month match for employees who participate. If the governor approves, the match would become effective on July 1, 2014.

In other budget news, there may be an additional \$1.5 million of state general revenue funding for Amtrak. That will bring the total funding up to \$10.4 million. An addition of \$500,000 in state general revenue funds was also allocated for state transit assistance. That brings the total to \$1 million.

Governor Nixon can sign his approval of this year’s budget any time between now and June 30.

A Flash of Brilliance for Work Zones

by Jim Dickson



MoDOT’s use of truck-mounted attenuators has greatly improved work zone safety, but the units still are hit frequently by inattentive drivers. Thanks to an innovation by St. Louis District Maintenance Supervisor John Russel, the problem may be solved. Russell created LED Panic Lights by mounting six white lights to the back of a TMA unit with a manual switch within easy reach of the TMA driver. Drivers are instructed to activate the panic lights only when an approaching motorist is not showing signs of changing lanes. The lights are turned off once the motorist does change lanes.

Watch it in action at: [LED Panic Lights Video](#). Read more details about the LED Panic Lights at: [LED Panic Lights Summary](#) (works for active employees only).

New Safety Tools Available

by Beth Wright

During the last month, new PPE posters have been distributed to all facilities across the state. Employees can easily check the posters to see the PPE requirements for the work they will be doing that day or night. With the PPE changes beginning July 1, the posters will help employees be prepared to work safe. A new short animated video on the PPE changes is also available - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KW59h0Oqzk>.

Also, the latest operational video, Take Time to Be Safe, is posted on the Internet. This newest video walks through safely setting up and tearing down a work zone, and also reminds employees about the importance of some of the basics – like circle check - <http://wwwwi/intranet/SafetyVideos.htm>.

Supervisors are asked to use these tools to keep the safety discussion going with employees. We want to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep employees safe. Remember to Take Time to Be Safe, focus on your task and never take a shortcut!

Thank you for all you do to help everyone go home safe!



Watch a short animated video on PPE changes.

Personal Wellness Leave Now Available to Employees

by Linda Wilson Horn

As a MoDOT employee, you now have a new option for leave to address your personal wellness goals. Effective May 15, 2014, the Sick Leave policy (Policy 3500) has been revised to allow employees to use up to one hour of accrued sick leave each month for Personal Wellness Leave (PWL) related to physical fitness.

“We encourage health and wellness for our employees,” said Human Resources Director Micki Knudsen. “This is one more tool to help you take time for health and wellness in your busy life.”

Personal Wellness Leave can be used for activities including, but not limited to: attending a gym or fitness class; taking a walk; jogging/running; bicycling; attending a non-MoDOT sponsored class, webinar or other health-related course on diet, exercise or wellness-related topic; attending yoga, aerobics or kickboxing classes; or participating in a tobacco cessation, weight management, stress management or other related disease management session. The Personal Wellness Leave does not apply to activities such as shopping, running errands, visiting family members or friends, or taking extended lunch periods wherein health and wellness are not the focus of the lunch.

Personal Wellness

You can request to use the Personal Wellness Leave through the same approvals with your supervisor as requesting any other type of leave. The one hour of leave each month can be taken in increments of 15 minutes but no more than one hour per month. The request must be submitted and approved in advance of using it.

The Personal Wellness Leave is different from and in addition to the Work Life Center/MEE Zone hours. Work Life Center/MEE Zone hours are to be used for wellness events hosted or sponsored by MoDOT or for accessing online MEE Zone resources. The MEE Zone hours cannot be used for physical fitness activities.

Here are some other common questions about how to use the Personal Wellness Leave:

Can I use several hours of Personal Wellness Leave one month and then not use it the next several months?

No. “banking” of accrued sick leave for a single Personal Wellness Leave event is not allowed. It is limited to using one hour per month.

My work group and I want to pay a fitness instructor to come on site to our work location to lead us in a fitness class for one hour each month. Is that an acceptable use of Personal Wellness Leave?

No. We cannot use MoDOT facilities for non-MoDOT business or activities.

My work group and I would like to all take our Personal Wellness Leave at the same time to take a walk. Is this permissible?

Your supervisor will have to determine if this is permissible based on your work load and whether multiple employees can be gone at the same time.

Can I use this one hour of Personal Wellness Leave in conjunction with my annual leave? For example, can I take one hour of Personal Wellness Leave to work out or do some physical exercise and then take more hours of AL?

All Personal Wellness Leave hours and Annual Leave hours must be approved by your supervisor prior to use. If your supervisor approves, you may use an hour of Personal Wellness Leave for a qualifying fitness activity in conjunction with annual leave.

Team Talk

by Roberta Broeker

On Monday and Tuesday, MoDOT refunded \$978 million of state road bonds. The bonds were originally issued in 2006 and 2007, and the refunding will save interest over the remaining repayment period, helping us make the best use of every dollar available.

Simply put, refunding bonds is a lot like refinancing a home mortgage. As interest rates drop, many homeowners refinance their debt for a



Click above to watch Chief Financial Officer Roberta Broeker discuss MoDOT's bond refunding.

best we can with every dollar. By monitoring what is happening in the financial world and keeping our eye on the interest rates, we can help save taxpayers a lot of money.

I sat down with Devin Frank, a resource management analyst from our Financial Services division, to talk about bond refunding and how it can mean big savings for the taxpayers. Please take some time to watch that video and learn more about bond refunding and why MoDOT takes on debt to help deliver a world-class transportation experience.

If you have any questions, I'd love to hear them.

lower rate. When MoDOT issued these 20-year bonds, interest rates were higher. As it gets closer to the time when the bonds will be paid off we can "refinance the mortgage" to get a lower interest rate and save money.

When people buy a house, they rarely have the cash on hand to pay for the home outright. Instead they get a mortgage loan and make payments over time. MoDOT used these bonds in a similar way, allowing us to move forward with construction projects that have a big impact, like the Safe and Sound Bridge Program, the Stan Musial Veterans Memorial Bridge, the new I-64, the Smooth Roads Initiative, and the host of great regional projects we built under the Smoother, Safer, Sooner program with the Amendment 3 bond proceeds.

Taking on this debt also allowed us to avoid the inflation cost in of building materials and labor, so we got more project for the dollars than if we saved up the money and built projects as cash was available sometime in the future.

Our MoDOT values state that we are to "be accountable." As stewards of taxpayer dollars we are accountable for making sure we do the very

Safety Program Award

by Tammy Wallace

MoDOT's Comprehensive Safety Program was recognized by the National Safety Council, Ozarks Chapter, at their recent annual conference in Springfield. The 2014 Safety Team Excellence Award was given by the Council based on several components of the safety program:

- Developing a comprehensive safety team to organize, update, clarify and communicate all safety related information.
- Creating a Safety Commitment that integrated five key messages and the slogan "Safety Begins With Me". The safety messages are:
 - I'm Safe
 - What I Use Is Safe
 - Where I Am Is Safe
 - My Customers are Safe
 - So We Go Home Safe
- Creating a webpage to house all safety policies and procedures, along with additional internal and external safety information.
- Creating an app so employees can access the information on smartphones where ever they are located.
- Rewriting and updating all safety policies and procedures in an easy to understand, consistent format.

Safety and Health Managers Shari Dye and Chris Engelbrecht attended the conference and accepted the award on behalf of the Comprehensive Safety Team.



Left to right, MoDOT Safety and Health Managers Chris Engelbrecht, Shari Dye, and Pat Hart, President, Board of Directors Safety Council of the Ozarks.

Click It or Ticket

by Kelly Jackson

Summer travel season is upon us. Whether you're planning a weekend drive or that long summer trip, please protect yourself and those you love by making sure everyone in your vehicle is buckled up - every trip, every time.



The Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety is joining with state and local law enforcement May 19 - June 1 in the national "Click It or Ticket" enforcement campaign to crack down on buckling up. Missouri's seat belt usage remains relatively unchanged at 80 percent, and consistently below the national average of 87 percent.

Wearing a seat belt is the most effective way to reduce injuries and fatalities in a crash. When worn correctly, seat belts can reduce the risk of death for front seat occupants of passenger cars by 45 percent. Similarly, belt use reduces the risk of serious non-fatal injuries by 50 percent for front seat

occupants.

For more information about Click It or Ticket, visit www.savemolives.com, and follow the coalition on Facebook and Twitter.

Fatality Update



What's Happening



WOW!

Nearly 53 percent of all MoDOT employees completed the employee satisfaction survey in April. That's a great response rate. Thanks to everyone who participated. Stay tuned for more information about the survey results.



MPERS Board of Trustees Election April 30-May 22

There's still time left to cast your vote to add new members to the MoDOT and Patrol Employees' Retirement System's Board of Trustees.

Voting can only be done online, and the deadline is today, so cast your note now - [VOTE!](#)



Preventative Measures

When it comes to your health, what you don't know can hurt you. Medical tests and screenings can help you find problems early when they are easier to treat. Vaccines and immunizations are also important for health protection.

Coventry Health Care wants to help you make the most of your health and benefits. Read more about preventative care in Coventry's newsletter on the Central Office page of Connections - [Central Office page](#).



Rams Ticket Discounts

The St. Louis Rams are offering special early bird discounts for state employees from now until June 15. Check out the discounts here - [Information Flier](#).

May Retirements

Charles A. Buckles – NW – 15 years
Dale K. Hague – NW – 21 years
Dennis R. Lorenson – NE – 14 years
John F. Baker – CD – 10 years

Andrew F. Goeller – CD – 25 years
Sheryl J. Nolker – SL – 23 years
Carl L. Gibbs – SL – 31 years
Terry L. Lancaster – SL – 35 years

Thomas J. Anna – SW – 28 years
Johnny E. Hart – SE – 29 years
Beverly J. Coleman – CO – 8 years
Lisa R. Mueller – CO – 31 years

In Memoriam

Theodore Baker
former D1 – April 20
Robert Barber

Gerhard Robbins
Central Office – April 24
Bing Northcutt

Walter Owen
former D10 – April 30
Gerald Brown

former D4 – April 21
Minor Watkins
former D4 – April 24

former D10 – April 27
Elmer Ellis, Jr.
former D3 – April 30

former D9 – May 3
Ralph Otto
Former CO – May 14

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65th Annual Traffic and Safety Conference Focuses on Innovation

Linda Wilson Horn

Traffic engineers and safety partners from across the state discussed the latest in traffic safety and operations technology at the 65th annual Traffic and Safety Conference, May 13-15 in Columbia. The annual meeting is hosted by the University of Missouri-Columbia, MoDOT, the Federal Highway Administration, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Institute of Transportation Engineers, and the Central Missouri Chapter of ITE. This year's meeting attracted 195 attendees including more than 20 MoDOT retirees.

The annual conference provides an opportunity to network with national, state and local transportation engineers from both the public and private sector. MoDOT staff presented information on recent innovations, including using high friction surfaces, the new generation of curve warning devices, speed warnings on DMS, MoDOT's real-time customer service and the assistance MoDOT offers to local municipalities through Traffic Engineering Assistance Program.



"Advances in technology can make our roads safer and move traffic more efficiently," said John Miller, traffic safety engineer and conference organizer. "However, an important part of the discussion is that although technology presents us with great solutions, it creates challenges with distracted driving."

A highlight of the session included a panel discussion with MoDOT retiree Don Hillis, University of Missouri professor Charles Nemmers and AAA Public Affairs Mike Right. The group discussed how technology has changed over their careers. None could have envisioned the driver distractions we deal with today. They emphasized the need for the younger engineers to think beyond to future problems we can't yet envision.

The conference included a competition for college engineering students. Students presented their traffic research project on posters, which were judged at the conference. On the second day of the conference, the winning project from a University of Missouri-Columbia engineering student presented research on traffic forecasting for work zones.

Guard Your Health With Preventative Care

Guard your health with preventive care

PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR WOMEN				
18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Age Appropriate Preventive Measure				
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cervical cancer/dysplasia screening: Pap smear every 3 years				
✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Routine chlamydia screenings for sexually active and pregnant women through age 24				

When it comes to your health, what you don't know can hurt you. Medical tests and screenings can help you find problems early when they are easier to treat. Vaccines and immunizations are also important for health protection.

Coventry Health Care wants to help you make the most of your health and benefits. That's why we are giving you some recommendations for adults from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Be sure to talk to your health care provider about the tests and immunizations that are right for you. Ask when you

Click on the flier to see helpful tips on preventative healthcare for men and women.

Time for Ticks!

May Health and Safety Tips

It's time again for ticks, which are most active during the months of April through September. MoDOT employees will spend a lot of time outdoors, on the road, mowing, cutting brush or keeping our roadways clear by picking up trash. It's important that you protect yourself from tick bites. Here's some information that can help you stay safe.

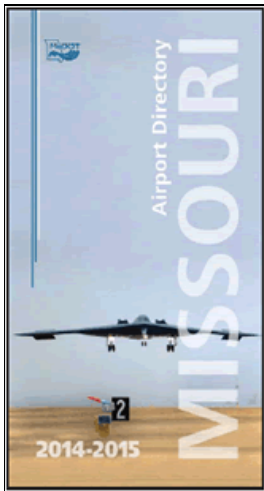
Do not become a tick's next snack!

- Use insect repellent containing DEET on exposed skin.
- Wear long clothing (sleeves, pants, socks) and treat clothing with products containing permethrin, which should not be applied directly to skin. This can protect clothing through several wash cycles.
- Avoid tall grassy areas and wood piles. Make sure your grass line is not too close to a wooded area.
- Walk in the center of trails.
- Shower as soon as possible (preferably within two hours) after coming inside to wash away ticks that may be crawling on you.
- Conduct a full body tick check with a handheld or full-length mirror.
- Examine clothing, ticks can travel on clothing and attach later.
- If you find a tick attached to you, remove it quickly and carefully.
- With fine-tipped tweezers, pinch the tick near the mouth and close to the surface of the skin and pull the tick upward in a slow, continuous motion. Do not twist or jerk because that could leave parts of the mouth embedded in the skin.
- After removal, clean thoroughly with rubbing alcohol, iodine scrub or soap and water.
- Do not use nail polish, petroleum jelly or heat as a way of getting the tick to detach.
- Ticks can carry bacteria, such as Lyme disease or Anaplasmosis, or parasites, such as Babesiosis. If bitten, it takes 24-36 hours for bacteria to spread to the blood.
- One of the most recognizable illnesses associated with a tick bite is Lyme disease, a bacterial infection beginning with flu-like symptoms and causing a bull's-eye rash at the site of the bite. If not treated in time, it can affect the heart and nervous system.



Be Careful Out There!

Central Office Happenings



New Airport Directory

The new 2014-2015 Missouri Airport Directory is now available. The directory offers aerial photographs and detailed descriptions of all 124 Missouri public-use airports.

Explore the 2014-2015 Missouri Airport Directory and Travel Guide online - [Directory](#). To request a printed copy, call MoDOT's Customer Service at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (275-6636) or email aviation@modot.mo.gov.

The directory is provided free-of-charge. Funding for this and all state aviation programs comes from aviation fuel taxes and not from general revenue or highway funds.

Upcoming Mee Zone Event

Engineering for Non-Engineers - Still Room Available!

June 5
8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Construction & Materials Lab, Room 201
1617 Missouri Blvd., Jefferson City
By Charlie Nemmers of the University of Missouri

This class covers the fundamentals of transportation engineering, highway and bridge design, construction, operations

and maintenance. The class is fun, interactive and easy to understand--perfect for those who are not engineers, but who work with engineers regularly.

Charlie Nemmers is a professional engineer currently serving as director of the Transportation Infrastructure Center at the University. He also leads the research program for a major U.S. corporation in the field of civil infrastructure. He has been conducting this training with MoDOT (and many other organizations) for over 10 years. Read more - [Charlie Nemmers](#).

Enroll in the class using the [LMS Student Center Sign On link](#) (*active employees only*). Class #24208.

For questions about Mee Zone Events, contact Kristen Bagwill - Kristen.Bagwill@modot.mo.gov or (573) 751-3941.

See what's happening on the [Mee Zone Blog!](#) (*active employees only*).

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Safe Driving Wins Local Teen A Car

For the seventh year in a row, a St. Joseph-area youth has won a car through the "I'm A Safe Driver" program. This teen education program is co-sponsored by the St. Joseph Police Department Traffic Unit, the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office, local radio stations KJO and Q Country, the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge #3, Car City Chrysler and the Northwest Region Coalition for Roadway Safety.

This year's program extended beyond St. Joseph high schools to include two other Buchanan County school districts. Each student with a valid driver's license was able to mail in a post card pledging to drive safely throughout the year. Each month, names were drawn from all entrants for gas cards, car washes, etc. A traffic violation or drug or alcohol violation disqualified any entrant from the monthly or grand prize.

Officer Brendan McGinnis is in charge of the program for the St. Joseph Police Department. "We believe in safe driving," McGinnis said. "And the way to promote that is with programs like this, which we're so happy to do with Car City. We want everyone, youth and parents, to remember to Buckle Up and Arrive Alive."

Out of the 872 eligible high school students who entered since the beginning of the year, 36 gathered at Car City Chrysler on the morning of May 10, to see if they were the big winner. The Fraternal Order of Police lodge served hot dogs and chips while the local police department verified that all entrants were eligible. At noon, several gift certificate packages were handed out and then came the big drawing.

Matt Cathey, owner of Car City Chrysler, drew the name for the winner of the one-owner, 1999 Chrysler 300 M. St. Joseph Central High School senior Cortney Johnson is the proud owner of this new car. Johnson, who graduates this week, said the program is definitely valuable, and while she doesn't consider herself a lucky person, she is very grateful for the new car.



All entrants had to check in at a registration table and present their driver's license to be eligible on the day of the drawing.



Once entrants checked in, officers cross-checked their violations list to make sure each entrant had no traffic, alcohol or drug violations on their record.



The 1999 Chrysler 300 M grand prize was available for all entrants and families to check out prior to the drawing.



Officer Brendan McGinnis was interviewed by local media about the success of the "I'm A Safe Driver" program in St. Joseph.



Thirty-six high school students lined up to hear if they were the lucky winner of the free car.



Central High School senior Cortney Johnson, right, with her mother and sister just after learning she was the winner of the grand prize for safe driving.

Just Drive Campaign Comes To Unionville



ThinkFirst's Kayle Denny spoke with students at Putnam County High School about the importance of buckling up every time you're in a car. One of Denny's best friends was killed in a car crash that left Denny with a permanent spinal injury. (photo by KTVO)

The Northeast Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety is working with KTVO on the "Just Drive" campaign to promote safe driving habits across Northeast Missouri. On Thursday, May 15, they brought that campaign to students in Northwest Missouri as well, with a program at Putnam County High School in Unionville.

Students heard Kayle Denny from the ThinkFirst organization relate her first-hand experiences. Denny was involved in a car crash that killed one of her best friends and left her with a spinal cord injury that has left her disabled. None of the car's occupants were buckled up when the accident occurred.

Native Trees Planted Along U.S. Hwy 36

A joint project between the Missouri Department of Conservation, the Missouri Master Naturalists and the MoDOT took a giant leap last week with the planting of trees along U.S. Hwy 36 between St. Joseph and Cameron. On Monday, May 12, members of the MMN Loess Hills Chapter planted seedlings in eight predetermined locations for the first phase of the tree-planting program. Eventually, two more phases will extend the plantings to Hannibal.

The planting sites were selected based on safety, other trees in the area and visibility. The trees are approximately five miles apart. The MDC and the MMN are hoping the program reintroduces native species to the area and educates the public on native Missouri trees.

Members of the Loess Hills Chapter will be responsible for monitoring the trees for damage or disease and replace any trees that fail to grow. Once the seedlings are more established and can be seen easily from the roadway, signs will be installed noting the type of tree planted at each location.



A member of the Missouri Master Naturalists Loess Hills Chapter plants black chokecherry seedlings marked by flags on a hill near the intersection of U.S. Hwy 36 and Route AC on the eastern edge of St. Joseph.



The Missouri Master Naturalists Loess Hills Chapter members who volunteered their time to plant seedlings at eight locations between St. Joseph and Cameron on U.S. Hwy 36. These members will watch over the seedlings to ensure they grow and will replace any damaged or diseased trees.

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Northeast District

Mark Twain Avenue Plans Are a Topic of Discussion



Brian Haeffner, area engineer, shares the three-lane option on Mark Twain Avenue with several attendees at a public meeting. Comments are being accepted until May 30, and all information can be found online at www.modot.org/northeast.

making improvements to the sidewalks,” Brian explained. “Some folks are fully supportive, but we are taking comments until the end of the month and will review these with the City, then make a decision about how to move forward,” Brian said.

The project is expected to be under construction in the summer of 2015.

Plans have been made to make improvements on Mark Twain Avenue in Hannibal and to resurface MO 79 through Hannibal to Stowell School, excluding the viaduct.

Recently a public meeting was held to give area residents the opportunity to view these plans, and about 40 people stopped by Hannibal City Hall to take a look.

“We had a mixed reaction to the three-lane proposal,” said Brian Haeffner, area engineer.

He and Project Manager Chris Knapp have been working with the City to flush out an agreement on maintaining the road after improvements are made.

“We are proposing a three-lane road with bike lanes on either side and

Around the District...



On May 16, Jeff Stewart, roadside manager, presented erosion control training to supervisors and crew leaders in the south area of the district.



New Florence and Warrenton crews worked together on the first concrete work of the season in the south area.



The Statewide Comprehension Safety Team received the 2014 Safety Team Excellence Award presented by the Safety Council of the Ozarks. Pictured are Shari Dye, Northeast District safety and health manager, Chris Englebrecht, Central District safety and health manager, and a representative from the Safety Council.



Cyndy Bliem -Sharpe, outreach coordinator for the NE Coalition for Roadway Safety, had an educational safe driving booth at Lewis County Safety Day held on May 6. There were more than 100 students in attendance.



The NE Coalition for Roadway Safety donated safety cones to the LaPlata Elementary School for use during student pick up. Pictured is Amy Crawford, area engineer and a member of the Coalition's executive committee, along with Lisa Coy, principal, and the kindergartners at LaPlata Elementary.

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Comments & Suggestions

We would like to hear from you. Send comments and suggestions to Tammy Wallace at Tammy.Wallace@modot.mo.gov.

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Annual Big Truck Night Brings Great Community Turnout

Hundreds of children turn out each year to get a close up look at MoDOT's big equipment that's used every day to fix the roads, stripe them and clear snow. This year's free [Big Truck Night on May 15 at the MoDOT offices](#) offered that and much more.

This is a great opportunity for the department to partner with many local safety offices as well. As a result, attendees were treated with demonstrations by the Lee's Summit Police Bomb Squad and K-9 Unit, and had the opportunity to explore equipment from the Lee's Summit Fire Department, the Jackson County Sheriff's Department and the D.A.R.E. car to name a few.

MoDOT's also displayed some of their safety tools including the remote mower and the seat belt convincer. MoDOT trucks on display included the salty dog brine tanker, a tandem dump with towplow, litter picker with tractor, sweeper, auger truck, sign boom truck and Motorist Assist truck.

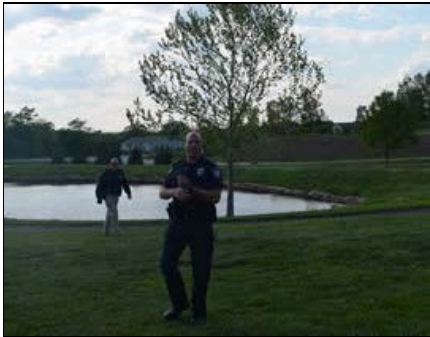
This was the fifth year of the annual truck festival, which continues to be one of the most popular community events hosted by MoDOT's Kansas City District.

To see more photos of the event, check out our [MoDOT Kansas City flickr feed](#).

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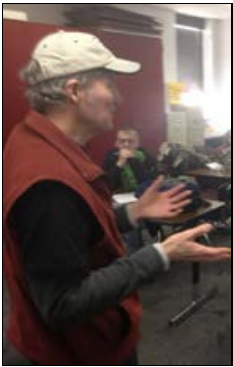
Oak Grove Students Get the Driver's Safety Message

More than 80 Oak Grove Driver’s Education students heard MoDOT’s driver safety messages May 19. Traffic Studies Specialist Zach Zalneraitis, Senior Highway Designer Jim Templer and Senior Customer Relations Specialist Steve Porter gave the students the full program, including an [introduction to roundabouts, diverging diamond interchanges, J-turns](#). They also gave a driver safety presentation, which emphasizes buckling up, staying off the cell phones, avoiding other distractions, moving over for emergency and MoDOT maintenance vehicles in or near the roadway, and avoiding impaired driving.

Zalneraitis also brought the fatal vision goggles, which help students understand just how impaired a person might be when under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

The visit to Oak Grove was among dozens that MoDOT’s team makes each year to present to more than 40 classes and well over 1,000 students.

If you are a teacher or driver's education instructor and want MoDOT to visit your classroom, [please request a speaker online](#).



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Central District

New Roundabout Installed at Lake Ozark

A mini-roundabout was installed at the intersection of Route W and Business 54 in Lake Ozark in an effort to move traffic more quickly and safely in the area.

In this location, the roundabout was painted on the existing pavement, eliminating the stop sign at Route W and Business 54. The center of the roundabout is flat to allow big trucks and vehicles pulling trailers to make the turns without hitting a raised surface.

In the past five years, the Route W and Business 54 intersection, which carries an average of 7,000 to 11,000 vehicles a day, has been the site of more than 40 crashes – mostly left-turn collisions.



Jefferson City Hosts Commission Meeting

The Jefferson City Area Chamber of Commerce treated members of the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission to a sneak preview of the new St. Mary's Health Center on May 13. The commission held its May meeting in Jefferson City on May 14, with the chamber and city serving as hosts.

MoDOT partnered with the city on the \$7.4 million cost-share project to build the Route 179/Mission Drive interchange that literally paved the way to construction of the new St. Mary's Hospital. The interchange was completed in 2011.

The \$200 million hospital construction project, scheduled for completion in November, has been a boon to the local economy with local laborers from Cole and adjacent counties providing more than 750,000 of the one million work hours.

Chamber Chairman Bob Gilbert and Jefferson City Mayor Eric Struempf both appeared before the commission to express support for the ¾-cent sales tax proposal for transportation.



Jefferson City Mayor Eric Struempf (at the podium) appears before the Missouri Highways and Transportation Commission on May 14 in Jefferson City.

District Dedicates Conference Room to Former District Engineer Wayne Muri

The Central District recently honored former District Engineer Wayne Muri by christening its newest conference room in his name during a ceremony on May 16.

Muri was presented with a plaque commemorating the occasion and his many years of service to MoDOT.

Muri served as the district engineer from 1981 to 1985. He also served as chief engineer from 1986 to 1994 and was AASHTO president in 1993.

The conference room was named for Muri in accordance with a long-standing tradition to name conference rooms after former district engineers.



Former District Engineer Wayne Muri (middle) and his wife Beryl (left) pose with current District Engineer David Silvester during the dedication ceremony of the Muri Conference Room at the Central District Office on May 16.



Sara Koestner, the niece of Assistant District Engineer Travis Koestner, was one of five executive members of a Missouri University of Science and Technology competitive engineering team (shown above) that won a regional competition in Stillwater, Okla. A link to a News Tribune article about Sara and her Steel Bridge Design Team, including a mention of how job shadowing her uncle at MoDOT sparked her interest in engineering, can be found here: <http://bit.ly/1m4VRWb>

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Comments & Suggestions

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Wentzville Maintenance Crew Embraces Veterans Group

by Shaunda White

MoDOT maintenance and other employees from the department showed their support for more than 500 bikers riding cross country in honor of veterans. The MoDOT team met the bikers at a scheduled stop in Wentzville on May 19. They presented them with 'Watch for Motorcycles' key chains, bumper stickers and other safety paraphernalia, provided by the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety, as a token of support for their cause.

Michelle Shryock, a Wentzville maintenance worker and Voice of SL member, suggested greeting the group at their stop in Wentzville, Mo. Shryock previously participated in the Run for the Wall ride in 2009.

"I knew how big of a crowd this event would draw. I felt as if this was an excellent opportunity to show our appreciation for veterans and promote roadway safety at the same time," said Shryock.

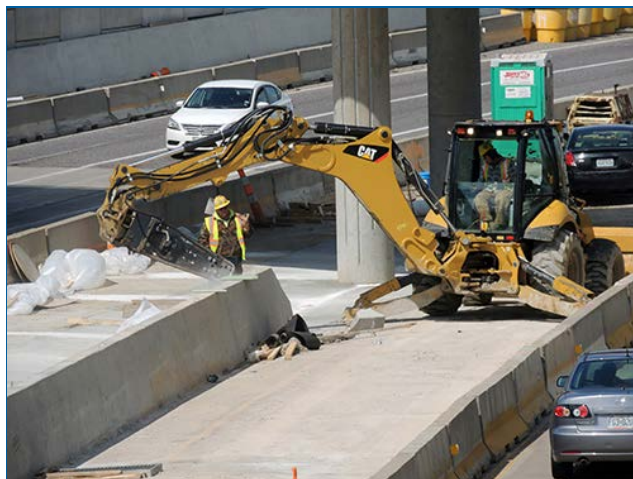
For the past 25 years, the Run for the Wall ride has increased in participation and recognition. This year the event has more than 350,000 participants registered to ride across state. The ride began on May 14 in California and ends at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC on Memorial's Day.

For more information on the 2014 Run for the Wall ride, please follow this link: <http://tinyurl.com/Runforthewall>



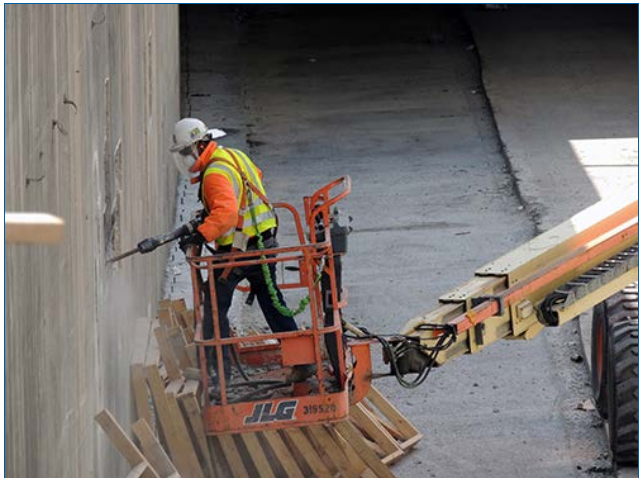
The bikers make their way through Wentzville, Missouri on May 19 as part of their Run for the Wall ride. The tour ends on MemorialDay in Washington, DC at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial site.

St. Louis City Projects Moving Forward



Crews continue to work on constructing the new bridges over I-64 at Tower Grove and Boyle and complete the new interchange. Work is

expected to be complete in mid-July.



Work continues on the Park Over the Highway project in downtown St. Louis City. Crews are working on the foundations for the new land bridge that will cross between Luther Ely Square Park and the Gateway Arch grounds.

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Comments & Suggestions

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Southwest District at Work



GETTING INPUT – District Construction, Materials and Design Engineer Steve Campbell (left) and Non-Motorized Transportation Engineer Ron Effland (right) speak with a blind customer about recent ADA upgrades to Glenstone Avenue (Bus. 44). The upgrades are intended to improve access for all pedestrian users. (Photo/David Mitchell)



TRANSPORTATION IS FUN! – Senior Maintenance Worker Randy Thompson shares a smile with a student in a MoDOT Incident Response Vehicle during a transportation fair at Springfield Public Schools Early Childhood Development Program this month. (Photo/Jennifer Williams)

ADA Upgrades to SW District Facilities Target Safety, Accessibility

by David Mitchell

Work is underway at the District Office in Springfield to replace sidewalks and the parking pad near the downstairs back door. It's all part of a MoDOT commitment to the Federal Highway Administration to make all of its public locations (district and regional offices, project offices, etc.) compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by the end of June.

"The sidewalk work and parking pad improvements will make the bottom floor of our office publicly accessible," said Scott Bachman, Assistant to the District Engineer. "Now our conference room will be accessible without special accommodations."

Bachman said additional modifications are needed for parking spaces near the public entrance to the district office as well as curb ramps and other stretches of sidewalk due to unevenness and general deterioration.

"It's not just sidewalks being upgraded to meet ADA requirements," said Facility Operations Supervisor Brad Leonard. There also will be new cabinets in the downstairs kitchenette area, ADA



Contractors pour cement for a sidewalk at the Southwest District Office as part of ADA compliance upgrades throughout the District. (Photo/Jennifer Williams)

placards on all ADA accessible restrooms, new handrails on each stairway and properly striped and signed ADA accessible parking spots,” he said.

Safety and accessibility are the keys to these changes for everyone who visits MoDOT facilities.

Similar work is being done at other facilities around the district to better accommodate citizens and future employees who may have physical challenges.

SW District Striping & Mowing Major Routes Nearly Finished, Attention Moves to Minors

by David Mitchell

Southwest District mowing crews expect to finish the first cut on major routes by the end of this week, allowing them to turn their attention to lesser traveled highways.



“We’ve made great progress to be done before the Memorial Day weekend,” said District Maintenance Engineer Michael Middleton.

The deadline for finishing the spring mowing is June 12.

Mowers are making one pass along the rights-of-way, primarily for safety.

“We’re out for sight distance issues. It’s a safety thing, especially on our minor routes,” said Middleton. “We want to make sure drivers can see oncoming traffic at intersections.”

Mowers are usually accompanied by at least one protective vehicle alerting drivers that mowers are ahead. Blades also are set at least six- to nine-inches high to make throwing gravel and other debris less likely.

But, Middleton said, sometimes things happen.

“We’re so close to traffic and we’re coming in and out of ditches and over driveways....”

District striping crews also are wrapping up work on the major routes and shifting to the regionally significant minor routes. When all routes are completed, sometime in November, crews will have striped roughly 14,000 line miles.

An unusually harsh winter was hard on state highways. Plows making many passes during snow fights and ice melting material took their toll on stripes.

“We’ve been running double shifts, day and night,” said Middleton. “After Memorial Day, we should be able to go to one crew per day.”

And like the mowers, striping operations are slow moving. Paint crews have at least one or two vehicles fitted with Truck Mounted Attenuators (TMAs) and flashing lights to alert drivers to the painting operation ahead.

Middleton said, “We’re trying to make sure everyone is aware of what’s ahead. We want everyone, drivers and MoDOT employees, to get home safe.”



For more info

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Comments & Suggestions

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Southeast District

SE District Participates in Employee Recognition Week

Join in the Fun May 26-30

Dust off your leisure suit or poodle skirt! That's just one of the many activities the Southeast District is asking employees to take part in during Employee Recognition Week May 26-30.

- **Tuesday, May 27: Tailgate Tuesday**
Help kick-off employee recognition week by wearing sports apparel to show support for your favorite team and bring in your favorite tailgating snack to share with your work group.
- **Wednesday, May 28: Wellness & What Not to Wear Wednesday**
Wednesday is about wellness! Try to get out and walk on one of your 15-minute breaks. As for the "What Not to Wear" part of Wednesday's celebration, put together your worst outfit and sport it to work!
- **Thursday, May 29: Throwback Thursday**
It's time to take a trip to another decade! Dress in clothing from any era on Throwback Thursday.
- **Friday, May 30: Flip-Flop Friday**
Relax. The week is almost over, and the weekend is quickly approaching! On Friday, employees may wear casual attire to work, including flip-flops and/or sweatpants/yoga bottoms.



Click the video to watch a special edition of the SE Scoop. Mark kicks off employee recognition week.

Employees may not be able to participate in every day of the employee recognition events due to work duties or schedules, but please try to participate in at least one activity! Please take photos of your celebration and email them to marissa.robey@modot.mo.gov.

Law Enforcement Grants Available

ARRIVE ALIVE

The Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety is currently accepting law enforcement grant applications for 2015 contract year. The SE Coalition covers 25 counties in Southeast Missouri.

Law enforcement grants can be used to help cover the cost of overtime and equipment for checkpoints, saturation patrols and law enforcement. Awarded agencies may be requested to attend and assist no more than two Coalition sponsored safety events during the year. Applications will be accepted through Friday, June 20.

Grants are carefully reviewed and awarded based on greatest need and the proposed impact of the request on reducing fatalities and injuries. Verification of a departmental seat belt policy and agency involvement with the Coalition will be considered.

Applications are available at www.savemolives.com/southeast/resources.html or by request. For more information please contact:

- Craig Compas - Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety Regional Coordinator
Phone: 573-472-5310 E-Mail: Craig.Compas@modot.mo.gov
- Sandy Taurone - Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety Regional Contact
Phone: 573-472-5388 E-Mail: Sandra.Taurone@modot.mo.gov
MoDOT, Southeast Region, P.O. Box 160, Sikeston, Mo. 63801 Fax: 573-472-5265
- Lt. John R. Davis - Chairman for the Southeast Coalition for Roadway Safety
Phone: 573-335-6621 x1095 E-Mail: JDavis@cityofcapegirardeau.org
Cape Girardeau Police Department, 40 S. Sprigg St., Cape Girardeau, Mo. 63703

The Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety is a partnership of safety advocates including law enforcement agencies, health care providers, state and federal government agencies, planning organizations and advocacy groups that work to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes in Missouri.

Please visit www.savemolives.com/southeast to access the grant application.

For additional information, contact the Missouri Department of Transportation's Customer Service Center toll-free at 1-888-ASK-MODOT (1-888-275-6636). Information is also available at www.facebook.com/SECoalition and www.twitter.com/CoalitionSE.

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